

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 ICA-11 AID-05 EB-08 NSC-05  
TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-07 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00  
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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1788  
INFO AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY  
AMCONSUL MEDAN  
AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 13283

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, ID, PP  
SUBJECT: VISIT OF PNG MINISTER OF COMMERCE

1. SUMMARY: PNG MINISTER OF COMMERCE PITA LUS RECENTLY COMPLETED A TWO-WEEK VISIT TO INDONESIA IN WHAT APPEARED A PNG EFFORT NOT ONLY TO SEEK BETTER TRADE TIES AND SOME TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE GOI, BUT ALSO FOR THE PURPOSE OF STIMULATING GOOD NEIGHBOR RELATIONS IN GENERAL WHICH HAD BEEN STRAINED OVER THE MAY BORDER EVENTS. DURING HIS VISIT, LUS MADE A COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT SUHARTO (WHO PROMISED TO VISIT PNG NEXT YEAR), CALLED ON FIVE INDONESIAN MINISTERS, TOURED VARIOUS INDUSTRIAL AND HANDICRAFT SITES IN BALI, AND JAVA AND SUMATRA, AND SECURED GOI PLEDGES OF ASSISTANCE IN TRAINING PAPUA NEW GUINEANS. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER LUS ARRIVED IN INDONESIA 9/9/78 AT THE INVITATION OF HIS GOI COUNTERPART, MINISTER OF TRADE RADIUS PRAWIRO. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, LUS CONVEYED A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM PNG PRIME MINISTER SOMARE TO PRESIDENT SUHARTO. SUHARTO REAFFIRMED THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP  
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BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF COOPERATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SCHEMES BETWEEN THEM. ACCORDING TO THE JOINT STATEMENT RELEASED FOLLOWING THE LUS-PRAWIRO TALKS, THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT THE STANDING INVITATION FOR HIM TO VISIT PAPUA NEW GUINEA COULD BE IMPLEMENTED SOME TIME NEXT YEAR.

3. IN ADDITION TO HIS TALKS WITH PRAWIRO, LUS CALLED ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER; ON THE MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE

ZANPOWER AND TRANSMIGRATION, AND INDUSTRY; AND ON THE CHAIRMAN OF THE INDONESIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY. FOLLOWING HIS TALKS WITH LUS MINISTER OF INDUSTRIES SOEHOED EXPRESSED THE GOI'S READINESS TO ASSIST PNG IN DEVELOPING ITS SMALL INDUSTRIES AND IN THE TRAINING OF ITS WORK FORCE. PRAWIRO LATER SINGLED OUT THE HAND LOOM AND WEAVING INDUSTRY, WOOD WORKING AND CARVING, RATTAN AND BAMBOO UTILIZATION, AND ROOF TILE MAKING AS INDUSTRIES FOR WHICH THE GOI IS PREPARED TO EXTEND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT ONCE; AND AT THE SEPTEMBER 27 CABINET MEETING FOLLOWING THE VISIT, PREPARATIONS WERE DISCUSSED FOR BOTH DETAILING INDONESIAN EXPERTS TO PNG FOR SURVEY AND TRAINING PURPOSES AND SENDING PAPUA NEW GUINEANS TO INDONESIA.

4. ACCORDING TO THE JOINT STATEMENT, THE TWO SIDES EXCHANGED VIEWS ON THE DESIRABILITY OF FINDING WAYS AND MEANS TO INCREASE TRADE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ON AS WIDE A RANGE OF COMMERCE AS POSSIBLE. (EMBASSY COMMENT: TWO-WAY TRADE IN 1977 BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AMOUNTED TO THE ALMOST UNBELIEVABLY LOW FIGURE OF \$1,080. THEY REPORTEDLY AGREED THAT A DIRECT TRADE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO IS PREFERABLE TO TRADING THROUGH  
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THIRD COUNTRIES. IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT AN INCREASE IN THE EXCHANGE OF VISITS OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AS WELL AS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERS AND PRIVATE BUSINESSMEN, WOULD BE IN ORDER. LUS ANNOUNCED THAT HE HAD EXTENDED AN OFFICIAL INVITATION TO PRAWIRO TO VISIT PNG. BOTH HE AND PRAWIRO PRONOUNCED THEMSELVES SATISFIED WITH THE VISIT.

5. DURING THEIR VISIT THE MINISTER AND MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY VISITED BALI, JOGJAKARTA, PALEMBANG AND WEST JAVA AND INSPECTED TEXTILE FACTORIES, SILVERWARE INDUSTRIES, HANDICRAFT AND WOOD CARVING INDUSTRIES, A POULTRY FARM, AN ELECTRONICS FACTORY, A CEMENT FACTORY AND LEATHER PROCESSING INDUSTRIES.

6. COMMENT: ACCORDING TO A PNG EMBASSY OFFICIAL HERE, THE LUS VISIT WAS INTENDED NOT JUST FOR COMMERCIAL AND TRADE RELATIONS FOR WHICH, CLEARLY, BOTH SIDES HAVE TO SCRAPE TO FIND FEASIBLE PROJECTS, BUT FOR THE GENERAL PURPOSE OF FOSTERING BETTER POLITICAL RELATIONS BEGUN WITH THE VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER SOMARE. THE ASIA DIRECTOR IN THE FON DEPT TOLD EMBOFF THAT SUHARTO IS

SERIOUS ABOUT ACCEPTING THE INVITATION FOR HIS FIRST  
VISIT TO PNG NEXT YEAR, FOLLOWING A PLANNED PRELIMINARY  
VISIT BY FOREIGN MINISTER MOCHTAR KUSUMAATMADJA WHO HAS  
ALSO TO MAKE HIS FIRST VISIT TO PNG. LUS, WHO IS  
REPORTED TO BE SOMETHING OF A CLOWN, IS SAID TO HAVE  
HAD THE NORMALLY RESERVED SUHARTO DOUBLED OVER IN  
LAUGHTER AS HE PRESENTED THE PNG INVITATION IN PIDGEON  
ENGLISH. BOTH SIDES IN OFFICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS REFLECTED  
THE EFFORT TO PROMOTE WARMER BILATERAL RELATIONS.  
MASTERS

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014